

The Life of Jesus Christ

Lesson 11 – In Galilee And Beyond

April 22, 2020

What defiles a man?
How are we cleansed?
Matthew 15:1-21; Mark 7:1-24

Purity and Defilement

Matthew 15:1-21

Jesus explains: *“Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated? **But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.** For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. **These are the things which defile the man;** but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man.”* (verses 17-20; cf. James 3:6)

Purity and Defilement

Matthew 15:1-21

Focus on the heart: it's **where defilement begins and resides:**

- *“Evil thoughts”* (Luke 6:45)
 - *“Murders”* (Matthew 5:21-22)
 - *“Adulteries”* (Matthew 5:27-28)
 - *“Fornications”* (1 Corinthians 6:18)
 - *“Thefts”* (Ephesians 4:28)
 - *“False witness”* (Ephesians 4:25)
 - *“Slanders”* (Colossians 3:8)
 - *“And things like these”* (Galatians 5:21)
- “These are the things which defile the man ...”* (verses 19-20; cf. Matthew 5:22, 28)

Purity and Defilement

Matthew 15:1-21

Defilement:

- *“But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.”* (Daniel 1:8)
- *“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”* (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Purity and Defilement

Matthew 15:1-21

True purity:

1. *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”* (Matthew 5:8)
2. *“How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word.”* (Psalms 119:9)
3. *“Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”* (2 Timothy 2:22)
4. *“And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”* (1 John 3:3)
5. *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”* (James 4:8)

Purity and Defilement

Matthew 15:1-21

The Key: Proverbs 4:23, *“Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.”*

How so? (Note the context of Proverbs 4:20-27)

1. Continually **pay attention** to God's word by continually **reading and studying.** (verses 20-21)
(Proverbs 1:24; Isaiah 48:17-18; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; Hebrews 2:1)
 2. Understand our **life depends on it.** (verse 22)
(Proverbs 3:22; Job 23:12; John 6:63, 68; Philippians 2:16)
 3. **Look straight ahead** - Don't be distracted by the things of this life. (verses 25, 27) (Hebrews 12:1-2)
 4. **Watch where you step** and eliminate that which causes one to stumble. (verse 26) (Hebrews 12:13)
- “Your word have I treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”* (Psalms 119:11)

Commands versus Traditions
Matthew 15:1-21

The solution to defilement: we need to be cleansed. (Ezekiel 37:21-23; 1 John 1:6-9; 2 Timothy 2:21; 2 Corinthians 7:1)

“Not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience.” (1 Peter 3:21; cf. Hebrews 9:13-14; Romans 6:3-4)

Some would suggest a child of God has no responsibility in being cleansed of their sin, advocating what is known as **“continual cleansing.”**

Commands versus Traditions
Matthew 15:1-21

What does 1 John 1:5-10 teach us about being cleansed?

Some falsely teach:

“These passages teach us that the Lord, for his faithful people, sets in operation a process by which he keeps them continuously cleansed ... If we walk in the light, by which it is meant if we do our best to live according to His word, the blood keeps on cleansing, just like the windshield wipers keep on wiping water off our windshields.”

(A sermon by Guy N. Woods on “Continual Cleansing” published by Britnell Publications, Little Rock, AR)

Implied is there is nothing to be done by the sinner to be cleansed.

Commands versus Traditions
Matthew 15:1-21

1 John 1:6-9, *“If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but **if we walk in the Light** as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.** 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 **If we confess our sins,** He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**”*

“Walk” versus step

Commands versus Traditions
Matthew 15:1-21

Believing the blood of Christ cleanses us without any confession or repentance is to advocate what Romans 6:1-2 condemns:

“Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2)

1 John 2:1, *“My little children, I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin.** And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”*

When will Jesus Christ be our **“Advocate”**? When we confess and repent of our sins. (Acts 8:13, 18-24)

Commands versus Traditions
Matthew 15:1-21

*“Therefore, **if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor ... useful to the Master.**”* (2 Timothy 2:21)

*“Let us **cleanse ourselves from all defilement** of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”* (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Not denying the necessity of the blood of Jesus to be cleansed! (Hebrews 9:13-14; Ephesians 5:26)

What did Jesus teach? (Luke 17:3-4)

Commands versus Traditions
Matthew 15:1-21

Christians who commit any sin need cleansing and restoration.

*“Brethren, even if anyone is **caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one** in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.”* (Galatians 6:1)

Walking in the light requires continual self-examination (2 Corinthians 13:5) and a purposeful stepping back into the light through confession and repentance.

Unconfessed and unrepented sin can cost us our souls. (Ezekiel 18:24-26)